

Claims in the Amendment

[Received by the International Bureau on April 19, 2001
(19. 04. 01): claims 1 to 4 and 7 to 11 in the first
application were amended; other claims were unchanged. (2
5 pages)]

1. (after amendment) A metalloprotease having an aggrecanase activity, which comprises an amino acid sequence of from the 213th position to the 583rd position of an amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1 or which consists of an amino acid sequence of from the 213th position to the 583rd position of the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1 wherein from 1 to 10 amino acid residues are substituted, deleted and/or inserted.

2. (after amendment) A metalloprotease having an
15 aggrecanase activity, which comprises an amino acid
sequence of from the 1st position to the 583rd position of
an amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1 or which
consists of an amino acid sequence of from the 1st position
to the 583rd position of the amino acid sequence
20 represented by SEQ ID NO:1 wherein from 1 to 10 amino acid
residues are substituted, deleted and/or inserted.

3. (after amendment) A metalloprotease having an aggrecanase activity, which consists of an amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1, an amino acid sequence of from the 1st position to the 687th position of an amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1, an amino acid

sequence of from the 1st position to the 583rd position of the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1, an amino acid sequence of from the 213th position to the 950th position of the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1, an amino acid sequence of from the 213th position to the 687th position of the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1 or an amino acid sequence of from the 213th position to the 583rd position of the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1, or any one of these sequences wherein from 1 to 10 amino acid residues are substituted, deleted and/or inserted.

4. (after amendment) A gene which encodes an amino acid sequence of the metalloprotease having an aggrecanase activity described in any one of claims 1 to 3.

15 5. A vector which comprises the gene described in claim 4.

6. A host cell which comprises the vector described in claim 5.

7. (after amendment) A method for producing the metalloprotease having an aggrecanase activity described in any one of claims 1 to 3, which comprises using the host cell described in claim 6.

25 8. (after amendment) An antibody against the metalloprotease having an aggrecanase activity described in any one of claims 1 to 3.

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9. (after amendment) A method for screening a substance capable of inhibiting an aggrecanase activity of a metalloprotease, which comprises allowing the metalloprotease having an aggrecanase activity described in 5 any one of claims 1 to 3 to contact with a compound to be tested.

10. (after amendment) A pharmaceutical composition for inhibiting degradation of proteoglycans, which comprises a substance capable of inhibiting the metalloprotease having an aggrecanase activity described in 10 any one of claims 1 to 3, as an active ingredient.

11. (after amendment) A gene represented by SEQ ID NO:24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 or 31, or a gene represented by SEQ ID NO:24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 or 31 wherein from 15 1 to 10 amino acid residues are substituted, deleted and/or inserted, which has a joint disease aggrecanase promoter activity.

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